

# Suicide Prevention Week 2016

Suicide Prevention Week September 5-11, 2016

World Suicide Prevention Day September 10, 2016



## Suicide Prevention is Everyone's Business

Suicide Prevention Week is Sept. 5 – 11, 2016. During this week individuals and organizations around the country and the world join their voices to broadcast the message that suicide can be prevented, and to reach as many people as possible with the tools and resources to support themselves and those around them. During this week you may hear or see the words “suicide prevention” more often than usual. Here are a few basic things you should know and that you can share with those around you:

**Suicide can be prevented.** Most of us have been touched by the tragedy of suicide. We may have lost someone close to us or been moved by the loss of someone we may have never met. For example, when Robin Williams died in 2014 millions of people felt intense grief. When a suicide happens, those left behind often experience deep shock. Even if they knew the person was struggling, they may not have expected suicide would be the result. However, many people who find themselves in a suicide crisis can and do recover. Suicide can be prevented; you can help by taking the following actions:

- **Know the Signs:** Most people who are considering suicide show some warning signs or signals of their intentions. Learn to recognize these warning signs and how to respond to them by visiting the Know the Signs web site ([www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org)).
- **Find the Words:** If you are concerned about someone, ask them directly if they are thinking about suicide. This can be difficult to do, but being direct provides an opportunity for them to open up and talk about their distress and will not suggest the idea to them if they aren't already thinking about it. The “Find the Words” section of the Know the Signs web site ([www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org)) suggests ways to start the conversation.
- **Reach Out:** You are not alone in this. Before having the conversation, become familiar with some resources to offer to the person you are concerned about. Visit the Reach Out section of the Know the Signs web site ([www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org)) to identify where you can find help for your friend or loved one.

The Know the Signs campaign is one of several statewide initiatives funded by counties through the voter-approved Mental Health Services Act (Prop 63). These efforts are administered by the California Mental Health Services Authority (CalMHSA) and are part of Each Mind Matters: California's Mental Health Movement.

**Prevention Works.** Many people who feel suicidal don't want to die. If they can get through the crisis, treatment works. There are programs and practices that have been specifically developed to support those who are in a suicide crisis. The Suicide Prevention Resource Center hosts a registry of 160 programs, practices and resources for suicide prevention. You can learn more about them by visiting <http://www.sprc.org/strategic-planning/finding-programs-practices>.

An evaluation of the Know the Signs campaign in California found that more people now feel prepared to recognize the warning signs of suicide and confident to intervene with someone they are concerned about. The evaluation also found that suicide prevention training programs funded in California will have a long-term impact in the state, potentially preventing at least 140 deaths and 3,600 suicide attempts over the next three decades. The analysis also estimates that for every \$1 the state invests in the suicide prevention program, the people of California will receive an estimated \$1,100 in economic benefits such as reduced spending on emergency care and increased earnings. Prevention not only works to reduce suffering and distress, it also makes financial sense.

### **Help is available**

The Suicide Prevention Lifeline (1-800-273-8255 - TALK) offers 24/7 free and confidential assistance from trained counselors. Callers are connected to the nearest available crisis center. The Lifeline is also available in Spanish, and for veterans or for those concerned about a veteran, by selecting a prompt to be connected to counselors specifically trained to support veterans.

To find local services and supports, visit the Reach Out section of the Know the Signs resources page where you will find California statewide and national resources as well as links to resources in your county: [www.suicideispreventable.org](http://www.suicideispreventable.org)

### **Add Your Voice to World Suicide Prevention Day**

Sept. 10, 2016 is World Suicide Prevention Day. This is an opportunity to join millions of others around the globe to focus public attention on preventing suicide through diverse activities to promote understanding about suicide and highlight effective prevention activities. Find out more about joining this collective call to action by visiting [www.iasp.info/wspd/](http://www.iasp.info/wspd/).